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Report of the regional implementation meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean*

1. The participants at the regional implementation meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean had two days of very fruitful discussions, which evidenced the wealth and the creativeness of the work and thinking in the region. They all had the freedom to share, listen and learn, which helped them to realize that they shared many perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda. The present summary conveys the broad lines of the rich dialogue.

2. The special vulnerabilities of the small island developing States were amply acknowledged at the meeting. The two-day meeting of Caribbean States held in advance provided key inputs by highlighting the challenges faced by those States. The participants also drew attention to the fact that the region recognizes those needs and shows full solidarity with the Caribbean States.

3. The participants agreed on the cornerstones upon which the new agenda should be built and share the view that, to achieve well-being and eradicate poverty in a structural manner, progress must be made towards a visionary sustainable development platform. The regional approach is systemic and holistic, and all participants have emphasized the importance of the transition towards a new mentality that places humans at the centre from a comprehensive perspective that is in harmony with the planet.

4. It was concluded that the new agenda should be universal, with obligations, responsibilities and opportunities for all. It should be an agenda that obliges all countries, and not only developing countries, to take action. In this vein, the participants also agreed that it should address global aspects and processes, such as international trade, the financial system and migration.

5. Conceptually, the agenda should enable countries to stand up to global challenges but at the same time have the capacity to address the specific features, needs and priorities of regional, national and local contexts. Accordingly, it will be

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important for the framework to provide modalities of differentiation to enable the countries to take ownership of the agenda and adjust it to their development plans.

6. Emphasis was placed on the need to build the future agenda around interrelations between key themes and sectors for development in order to face complex challenges and seek concrete and sustainable solutions within a rights-based approach.

7. One of the priority themes is sustainable production and consumption patterns, which participants emphasized should be both an objective and a cross-cutting pillar of the new agenda, recognizing that sustainable production and consumption have an economic, cultural and social perspective and are prerequisites for achieving genuine equity, inclusion and environmental sustainability.

8. The participants recognized the centrality of education as a condition for development and consider education as a fundamental human right necessary to guarantee all other rights. They also emphasized that education was a prerequisite for inclusive growth and for satisfying other needs, including health, food security and decent employment. Furthermore, they affirmed the importance of education for sustainability.

9. The participants made headway in identifying priorities for the new agenda, such as food security and the need for infrastructure for development, in particular for connectivity in the telecommunications, transport and energy sectors. The need to generate decent work, a determinant of equitable and sustained growth, was a recurring theme. The participants drew attention to such critical issues as demographic trends, the dizzying pace of urbanization, migration, health and the need to build resilience to a range of risks and vulnerabilities.

10. Means of implementation are of great importance for the region. From development assistance and South-South and triangular cooperation to public spending and the role of the private sector, financing for sustainable development is a key tool for turning this agenda into a reality.

11. The participants made progress in identifying the areas in which continued efforts are required if the region is to maintain its leadership in defining the new agenda. They agreed upon the need to continue working immediately and beyond 2015 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and recognized that they must look harder at how to achieve that continuation in practical terms. Understanding how to do this varies, from a proposal to integrate the Goals fully into the framework of the sustainable development goals, to proposals to keep the two sets of goals separate.

12. One consideration arising from those two approaches to the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals and the sustainable development goals is how to prioritize resources and poverty eradication efforts. Concern was expressed that financing for immediate needs could be diverted towards other efforts. At the same time, it was clear that eradicating poverty in a sustainable manner and tackling basic needs would need investment and structural public policies.

13. One tension that used to exist between the development and sustainability agendas has now been overcome. It has been stated repeatedly that irreversible poverty eradication must occur within a context of sustainable development.

14. At present, the task of forging a deeper understanding of how to translate this synergy into defining a harmonious relationship between growth and the natural environment remains pending. There are diverse visions of how to achieve this, whether the starting point should be the planet's own limits or the response needed to provide for the well-being of 9 billion people. As the participants saw it, the two approaches must be complementary.

15. After two days of intensive and productive discussions, it became clear that the region has an enormous leadership potential in breaking with old paradigms and presenting creative visions. The experience of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, showed the participants that, working as a region, they have greater capacity to influence the agenda.

16. For the region it is clear that the only way to move ahead on this path is through broad and meaningful participation, both in defining and in implementing the sustainable development agenda. The countries of the region must work hand in hand with civil society in all its forms, as well as with the private sector and international organizations, treating each other as agents of change collectively responsible for the future.

17. A brief summary does not adequately capture the richness of the discussions at the meeting. However, the participants trust that the words above will reflect the dynamic, innovative and constructive spirit of the meeting.